

Preparations were now ready for the battle of Bellicourt which was preliminary to the smashing of the Hindenburg line.

Company "D," attached to the 5th Australian Pioneer Battalion for the purpose of opening up the roads for single horse traffic behind the Infantry advance, was in position on the Red and Black roads as follows:

1st Platoon Co. "D," under Lieut. Stroup, in trenches at L 12 c 5.5, Black Road.

2nd Platoon Co. "D," under Lieut. Field, in trenches at L 2 c 8.2, Black Road.

3rd Platoon Co. "D," under M. E. Rust, in trenches at L 5 d central, Red Road.

4th Platoon Co. "D," under M. E. Ledbetter, in trenches at L 5 d central, Red Road.

The Second Battalion was engaged on road work under the Chief Engineer of the Australian Corps, the object in view being to keep the roads open for artillery, ammunitions and supplies, during the attack, and later to convert one of the roads into a two-way motor traffic road.

In practically every case a great deal of data recording the nature and general condition of roads to be used were available before attack. This data consisted of information gained by intelligence, by existing maps of previous roads, by aerial photographs, and by direct observation. Some of the roads were entirely new ones constructed for H. T. or M. T. by the enemy or old roads of a minor nature which had been brought up to first class condition by him. The gathering of all this data was of the utmost importance to the organization of the working force and subsequent prompt routing of traffic.